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Student Teaching Portfolio

Standard Eleven: *The teacher understands the process of character education based on pro-social values and stimulates the examination and understanding of personal, social, and civic values.*

Character education is essential when entering the teaching profession. To be a successful teacher we not only need to be lifelong learners academically, but we also need to continually grow our character as well. One's character within the education field should be behavior that exhibits a voluntary need to benefit others and be motivated by empathy. Being an educator, one must lead by example for their students to promote and encourage personal, social, and civic values, both inside and outside of the classroom setting.

Character education begins with the understanding that our character consists of personal, social, and civic values. One's personal values are whom that person is and are normally used to make decisions and grow in life. Personal values in the field of education are centered on what one can do to help students, colleagues, or the community. One's personal values must be that of caring and nurturing nature along with integrity and kindness. While everyone's personal character will value traits differently, these are a few that I found to be widespread throughout the field of education.

One's character must also consist of social values as well. Social values are values that are based on keeping society in order. Items such as our fundamental human rights, respect for other human beings, patriotism, and equality are a few that fall under the social values category. In order to be a successful teacher, one must understand the importance of social values within

out our character, but also demonstrating to students how to practice good social values inside and outside of the classroom setting.

Along with social values, one must have an understanding of acceptable civic values as well. Our character is not just built within the classroom setting, but also is built outside of the classroom, and affects our character and who we are greatly. Outside of the classroom, one must practice and demonstrate positive civic values. These values would include being a law-abiding citizen, practicing our rights given to us by the government, and being respectful to other citizens and properties. How one acts as a citizen outside of the classroom is important to one's character.

Besides having an understanding of what values shape one's character, one needs to promote and encourage the continual discussion of personal, social, and civic values. In order to successfully promote these values, one must be demonstrating these values on a daily basis within the classroom.

To promote personal values, one must incorporate into the classroom a good behavior model. The teacher should demonstrate behaviors such as respect, accountability, fairness, and honesty. In that respect the teacher must also hold the student accountable to practice these behaviors as well. A teacher is not only constantly building their own character; they are building the character of their students as well.

Social and civic values should also be incorporated into daily lessons as well. Teachers should be promoting and encouraging students to act appropriately when they are out and about within the community. The teacher should be encouraging students to have respect for all others and believe in equality for all as well. The teacher should also promote to their students what a good citizen looks like and does within the community. Having continually discussions of how

to be a law-abiding and respectful citizen should happen within every classroom, regardless of content.

A teacher's character is shaped by personal, social, and civic values and reflects who they are as a person outside of the classroom. As an educator, it is one's job to promote positive character values to their students.

Disposition:

In order to successfully meet Standard Eleven, there are many dispositions in which teachers must display. The first being teachers must have integrity. Integrity is essential for a teacher to have a devotion to their morals in life, but also to support the morals that other hold as well. A teacher must stick to their morals in a positive manner and display appropriate personal, social, and civic values. One must also have the integrity to support students who do not have the same values as they do. While we want all students to develop a positive character, many students will not have the same values that a teacher may hold. This doesn't mean the student doesn't have positive values; they just have different values that they have chosen to follow closely. With integrity a teacher can successfully uphold positive moral values while supporting students' character as well.

Performance:

During my student teaching, I have incorporated Standard Eleven on a daily basis. Everyday it was my responsibility to demonstrate to students what positive behavior looked like.

While at Plymouth High School we completed a unit on civic values within the ninth grade curriculum. Within this unit we discussed what being a good citizen looked like, and the

standards that should be followed in order to be a good citizen within the community. Besides discussing with students ways we can be good citizens, it was the job of my cooperating teacher and myself to demonstrate to students how we are model citizens ourselves. We discussed with them how we behave when we our out within the community, how we exercise our right to vote, and treated others fairly.

My placement at Riverview Middle School is where I had the greatest opportunity to promote my character values. Middle school is a time where many students struggle with how to act appropriately and how to be good citizens. A lot of time is dedicated at the middle school level to address and demonstrate to the students' good personal, social, and civic values. Daily we discuss with students how to act appropriately as an individual, as a group member, as a student within the building, and as a person within the community. As teachers we work together to demonstrate these positive traits as well. For myself, I also show positive behavior towards all students regardless of their background. With students who are known to have behavioral issues, I demonstrate and encourage them to practice having positive values as well.

No matter what school setting I am in, I am always practicing and promoting a positive character education.

Artifact:

The artifact I have chosen for this standard is a Humans Right unit we are completing with our middle school students. The students are exposed to what the human rights are that were declared by the United Nations. We showed students the rights that are set in place and asked them to see if any were being broken or abused. Many students were able to recognize that these rights were being violated in many foreign countries and even realized that these rights were

being violated in our own country. My cooperating teacher and myself decided to have students read an introduction about children having the power to change society and the cultural norms. We also then had students complete a “found poem” out of magazine clippings, to create a poem to use their voice to spread the word about human rights.

These activities led the students to feel empathy and remorse for others in the world that do not have the same rights and lifestyle that they benefit from. It also made the students realize that how they treat one another could potentially be violating the human rights. This gave students an insight on to how they should possibly alter their personal, social, and civic values to abide by the human rights. With the “found poem” student were also able to express their views non-verbally and in a non-violent way, which demonstrated to students that changes can be made peacefully and respectfully within a community or school setting.

Reflection:

Throughout my education at Lakeland College and during my student teaching placements, I have been able to understand the process of character education. While we always assume our values and morals will never change in life, during my college years I have found that some of my personal, social, and civic values have changed slightly in a positive way. I have learned to be positive and accepting towards individuals who do not hold the same morals as I do. I have also learned to encourage students and others to share their morals with one another so we can all learn from one another.

I have also learned that what I do outside of school also is important and reflects who I am as an individual. You don't realize how much of a public figure you are until you step outside of the classroom and into the community. Everything I do within the community, there is always

a parent, colleague, or a student who could potential see me, it's my responsibility to maintain my character in public as well.

During my time student teaching, I also enjoyed seeing the student share their characteristics with me. It's amazing to see the variety of characters that are within a classroom and how we can all positively learn from one another.